

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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S E C R E T CAIRO 11893

EXDIS

FOR THE SECRETARY FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR EG IS

SUBJECT: ISRAELIS AND SINAI OIL INSTALLATION

1. DURING MY CALL ON GAMASY TODAY, HE SAID HE HAD ASKED MFA TO GET IN TOUCH WITH ME ABOUT ISRAELI REMOVAL OF EQUIPMENT FROM SINAI OIL INSTALLATIONS WHICH WILL MAKE IT DIFFICULT FOR EGYPTIANS TO CONTINUE PRODUCTIONS OVER ANY PERIOD OF TIME. HE SPECIFICALLY HAD IN MIND ABU RODEIS, ALTHOUGH HE STATED THAT HE AND HIS MINISTERIAL COLLEAGUES, DURING THEIR RECENT VISIT TO RAS AL SIDR, HAD FOUND SIMILAR ISRAELIS ACTS HAD TAKEN PLACE THERE. THUS, IN THE VILLAGE OF RAS AL AIDR, ALL OF THE DOORS, WINDOW FRAMES ETC HAD BEEN REMOVED. THERE HAD ALSO BEEN SUGGESTION THAT THE ISRAELIS HAD REMOVED A PIPELINE TO TRANSPORT WATER FROM THE PORT TO THE VILLAGE, ALTHOUGH GAMASY SAID HE WAS NOT MAKING ANY SUCH ACCUSATION SINCE IT HAD NOT BEEN PROVEN TO HIM THAT SUCH WAS THE CASE. HE HAD ORDERED THAT TEN EGYPTIAN MILITARY LORRY TANKERS BE MADE AVAILABLE AT ONCE TO HAUL WATER IF NEEDED. MILITARY LICENSE PLATES HAD BEEN REPLACED WITH CIVILIAN LICENSE PLATES.

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2. NOW ITALIANS AT ABU RODEIS HAVE REPORTED THAT

THE ISRAELIS ARE REMOVING BULK OF NEEDED MARINE AND LAND EQUIPMENT. TYPES WERE NOT SPECIFIED. WHAT IS LEFT, HOWEVER, ACCORDING TO ITALIANS, WILL NOT ENABLE CONTINUED SERVICING OF OIL FIELDS AND CONTINUED PRODUCTION AT PRESENT LEVELS. ADDITIONALLY, ISRAELIS HAVE REMOVED OIL FIELDS COMMUNICATION SYSTEM. FINALLY, ISRAELIS HAVE INSISTED THAT SOME 50,000 CUBIC METERS OF CRUDE OIL NOW AVAILABLE OR EXPECTED TO BE EXTRACTED BETWEEN NOW AND DEC 30 ARE NOT RPT NOT CONSIDERED AS EGYPTIAN PROPERTY. ISRAELIS INTEND TO TAKE AWAY THIS PRODUCTION. WHEN ITALIANS SOUGHT TO INSERT IN TRANSFER DOCUMENT THEIR RESERVATIONS, IN BEHALF OF GOE, ABOUT THESE REMOVALS, THEY WERE TOLD THAT ISRAELIS WOULD NOT RPT NOT BE WILLING TO SIGN THE DOCUMENT IF ANY SUCH RESERVATION IS INCLUDED. ISRAELIS, AGAIN ACCORDING TO ITALIANS, ALSO TURNED DOWN A PROPOSAL THAT THE ITALIANS SEND A SEPARATE LETTER TO THE ISRAELIS AND EGYPTIAN REPRESENTATIVES ON THE JOINT COMMISSION. AS A MATTER OF ACT, GAMASY STATED, ISRAELIS HAVE JUST ASKED FOR INDEFINITE POSTPONEMENT OF JOINT COMMISSION MEETING SCHEDULED FOR TOMORROW, NOV 25, ON GROUNDS THERE IS NOTHING TO DISCUSS.

3. GAMASY EXPRESSED HIS PERSONAL DISTASTE FOR THESE ISRAELI ACTIONS, BUT SAID EGYPTIANS WILL HAVE TO TRY TO MANAGE. ALTHOUGH HE HAD ASKED MFA TO REQUEST OUR INTERSESSION WITH ISRAELIS, HE OPINED RESULTS OF ANYTHING WE MIGHT DO WILL BE "INCONCLUSIVE". HE HAS THEREFORE INSTRUCTED GENERAL MAHGOUB TO INFORM SILASVUO OF WHAT HAS TAKEN PLACE. GAMASY OBSERVED EGYPTIANS HAVE NEVER BEEN HAPPY ABOUT JOINT COMMISSION. HENCE, IF ISRAELIS ARE GOING TO PLAY WITH IT IN THIS MANNER, EGYPTIANS WILL REQUEST POSTPONEMENT WHENEVER ISRAELIS NEXT ASK FOR A SESSION.

4. WHEN I RETURNED TO EMBASSY, THERE WAS A MESSAGE THAT FAHMY'S CHEF DE CABINET, OSAMA
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AL-BAZ, HAD TELEPHONED. I CALLED HIM BACK AND RECEIVED SUBSTANTIALLY THE SAME ACCOUNT AS ABOVE. ACCORDING TO AL-BAZ, HOWEVER, GAMASY HAD ASKED MFA TO REQUEST US TO "DELIVER EQUIPMENT TO MAINTAIN AND CONTINUE ABU RODEIS OPERATION" AND TO STATE THE GOE RESERVES ITS CLAIM TO THE 50,000 CUBIC METERS OF CRUDE BEING TAKEN BY THE ISRAELIS BETWEEN NOW AND DEC 30. WHEN I ASKED WHAT HE MEANT BY

"DELIVERY OF EQUIPMENT", AL-BAZ WAS PUZZLED. HE
THOUGHT GAMASY'S PURPOSE WAS TO ASK OUR INTERCESSION
WITH ISRAELIS NOT RPT NOT TO REMOVE IT. HE SAID
HE WOULD HAVE TO CHECK WITH GAMASY. HE MAY HAVE
SOME DIFFICULTY SINCE GAMSU LEFT FOR ALEXANDRIA
A HALF HOUR AFTER OUR MEETING, BUT IT IS MY
IMPRESSION THIS IS WHAT GAMASY HAD IN MIND IN
ASKING THAT THE MATTER BE BROUGHT TO OUR ATTENTION.

5. COMMENT: ABOVE IS EGYPTIAN VERSION OF WHAT IS
TAKING PLACE AS PROVIDED BY ITALIANS. WE HAVE
NO DIRECT MEANS OF CONFIRMING ACCOUNT. IF TRUE,
IT IS ANOTHER UNHELPFUL IRRITANT AND SEEMS IN-
CONSISTENT WITH THE DISENGAGEMENT AGREEMENT AND
THE PROTOCOL. WHAT SEEMS ESPECIALLY SHORTSIGHTED
IS REPORTED ISRAELI ACTION IN POSTPONING TOMORROW'S
JOINT COMMISSION MEETING IN WHAT APPEARS A
PATENT EFFORT TO AVOID HAVING TO DISCUSS THE
EGYPTIAN COMPLAINT. BY SUCH ACTION, ISRAELIS
MAY BE KILLING THE VERY FORUM THEY WANTED FOR SOME
KIND OF DIRECT DIALOGUE BETWEEN THE TWO SIDES.
BOTH SIDES CAN PLAY THE INDEFINITE POSTPONMENT GAME.
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